

PUBLIC COMMENTS

HB 3442

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & LIVESTOCK

Hearing Date: April 1, 2021 8:00 AM

John Russell

North Concho Veterinary Clinic, Texas Veterinary Medical Association

SAN ANGELO, TX

Ladies and Gentlemen of the House Agriculture Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a written comment in favor of HB3442. This May will begin my 23rd year as a licensed veterinarian in the Great State of Texas.

On October 16, 2020 I received an email from the Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners with an attached letter informing me of the dismissal of the complaint against me. This communication was the first I knew of this complaint, so I contacted the Board to get some information. Even though the case was dismissed, I wished to know what I was being accused of. By knowing this information, maybe I could learn to avoid any miscommunication that might lead to future issues. The investigator I spoke with assured me that they found no violation and would only tell me the case stemmed from a homeless pet that I treated (or possibly a pet owned by a homeless client, they were very vague). No date or any identifying information was given. I was told if I wanted a copy of the complaint, or any further information, I would need to request it through the Attorney General under the Freedom of Information Act. This request was denied.

As my case was dismissed, I have no firsthand knowledge of the process if the investigation had moved forward. But I find the process I went through very one-sided. There is no learning from one's "mistakes" if you are not even allowed to know what your alleged mistakes are.

In conclusion, I would urge you to vote in favor of HB3442 so a fair and balanced system can proceed.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

John E. Russell, DVM

Conrad Nightingale

Hill Country Veterinary Hospital

Bandera, TX

Am in full support of this bill by Dr. Anderson. Please contact me if you have further concerns

Dusty Goucher, DVM

self, owner, veterinarian

Rockwall, TX

As a veterinary professional, I was actually stunned to learn that if a complaint is ever filed against me, I have no rights. How can a complaint be filed against me without me even knowing what that complaint is? How can I ever improve or continue to evolve if I am never made aware of the complaint. This improvement may need to be in my medical expertise (I hope not), or in my communication skills, or perhaps in my staff education. There are many various aspects to running a successful privately owned veterinary hospital and knowing where mistakes are being made is essential. Please consider carefully the reasons you are currently withholding the complaint details from the subject of the complaint. Personally, I do not see a valid reason for the licensee to not know these details.

Katherine Hilla, Dr

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self

Austin, TX

I am in support of HB 3442 by Anderson and encourage you to also support it. It is extremely difficult for veterinarians to defend themselves against a complaint if they have no idea what is alleged. Basic fairness dictates that a veterinarian should be able to know what is alleged by the complainant.

Thank you for your consideration.

paul hunter, dr

self

kingwood, TX

i'm apposed to this bill which would hinder veterinary practice.

Lana Bush, DVM

Self employed veterinarian

Fredericksburg, TX

I support this bill. It is only fair that a copy of a complaint to the State Board of Veterinary Examiners be provided to the subject of the complaint. How can we, as veterinarians, defend ourselves if we do not even know the reason for which we need defense?

David Fernandez, Veterinarian

Stone Oak Veterinary Clinic

Sam Antonio, TX

I ask that you support this Bill so that Veterinarians like me will know what the complaint against us actually is as soon as it has been filed with the State Board. it will allow us to better prepare our defense.

Alicia Robinson, Dr.

Self

Kilgore, TX

As a practicing veterinarian in the state of Texas, I fully support Representative Charles 'Doc' Anderson, DVM and Senator Beverly Powell's Bill to provide the veterinarian a copy of the complaint. This will allow veterinarians to be better prepared and familiarize themselves with the case better so they can provide as much information and as best defense as possible, which will be important if their license is on the line. It also gives the opportunity for the veterinarian to learn and grow and see if there was something that could have gone differently to provide a better outcome for both the patient and the client.

James Amyx, DVM

Self, Veterinarian

Spring, TX

I fully support this bill as it creates fairness to the veterinarian in the event of a complaint filed to the TBVME. I personally have never received a complaint but I can imagine that the ability to see the complaint and know the exact patient that the complaint is concerning would be very beneficial to both the veterinarian and the investigation process. This would also allow the veterinarian to learn from medical or client communication mistakes. The veterinarian should be afforded every opportunity to defend themselves during the complaint process as very many complaints are unfounded.

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Laurel Douglass, Dr
Embrace Veterinary Care
Richmond, TX

It makes sense that a licensee know more than just the animal name and date range of the complaint; how else would the licensee know how to respond to a complaint. Seems only right to have a licensee understand the nature of the complaint and therefore a copy of the actual complaint should be included when the licensee is notified of a complaint. Even when a complaint is dismissed, the licensee should understand the nature of the complaint in order to update processes and systems in their workflow. Obtaining medical records and conducting interviews does not preclude allowing the licensee to a copy of the complaint.

Michael Jones, Dvm
Glen Rose Veterinary Clinic
GLEN ROSE, TX

This ought to be a no brainer. The owner, patient, date of service of complaint ought to be provided to the individual on whom the complaint was filed. The decision made including plaintiffs evidence needs to be provided to the veterinarian.

David Oden, Dr.
Oden Veterinary Hospital
Lubbock, TX

It would be very helpful to have more information when having a board complaint filed against me. This has happened to me. It is very frustrating not being able to properly defend myself, nor know the outcome of the process. Thank your for representing our profession.

James Greenwell
Self Employed
Plano, TX

HB3442 makes sense. If you are being accused of wrong-doing, where your license and livelihood may be on the line, you should have the complaint supplied to you. I would challenge the committee to compare our rules with those of other professions, especially attorneys. When I worked at a law firm in college, I remember speaking with an attorney who had a complaint against her. She stated that she didn't even have to answer the complaint as the board pre-screened it as not of merit. I don't believe veterinarians have that same privilege. There are many more attorneys in government vs veterinarians. I have always had concerns about this. Note: The Sixth Amendment guarantees the rights of criminal defendants, including the right to a public trial without unnecessary delay, the right to a lawyer, the right to an impartial jury, and the right to know who your accusers are and the nature of the charges and evidence against you.

I have felt that their rules were unconstitutional, as the layman that I am. I have no legal training, just worked during the holidays at Jones, Day, Reavus and Pogue in Dallas during summer and winter breaks.

Lloyd Leifeste, DVM
My self
Kerrville,, TX

It is imperative that all parties in a disagreement know all the facts. It is called discovery.

Connie Lindley, Dr.

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self

Childress, TX

Veterinarians need a copy of the complaint against them so they may properly address the issue(s) in the complaint. This will assist the Veterinarian to provide the documentation necessary to address the complaint to the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners.

Michael Willard, Dr.

self veterinarian

Seguin, TX

I strongly support this bill

Ty Rankin

Rankin Veterinary Clinic

Nash, TX

Unless this is to remain guilty until proven innocent, a person should have certain rights. Even if they happen to be a veterinarian. Such as, but not limited to, the right to know what you are being accused of, who your accusing person is and what it pertains to. These are basic rights given to a mass murderer. I feel a veterinarian should fall under our constitution as well.

Richard Reinap, Dr.

Bee Cave Veterinary Clinic

Austin, TX

Dear Agriculture & Livestock Committee Members,

Thank you for setting a hearing on this important bill. I have been practicing veterinary medicine for 15 years and have worked within the veterinary profession for the last 30 years. I have witnessed employers, colleagues and friends become victims of undue/unfounded stress and depression due to the ambiguity of information from the Texas State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners. When a licensee is given information that a complaint has been filed it is of utmost importance that the information be of true relevance because so much is at stake for the license holder. This is why the passing of HB 3442 is so important. In today's "cancel culture" society the more transparent the information is made, the more that detriment to only those deserving of penalty will occur. The veterinary profession is full of caring people that need to be treated as such and the stories of veterinarians finding a solution in suicide is devastating. When a licensee is kept in the proverbial dark about a Board complaint the negative consequences can be very real to the licensee and have lasting effect. I hope you will look upon HB 3442 as fair and needed legislation to lessen undue psychological burdens on the many great veterinarians serving the citizens and animals of the great state of Texas. I urge the committee to support HB 3442.

Sincerely,

Richard Reinap II, DVM

Kyle Jones, Dr

Lake Sharon Farm

Denton, TX

I strongly support Dr Charles Anderson's bill that provides info to the veterinarian about a complaint brought to him by the board.

Travis Wright, Dr.

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Travis Wright, DVM - Veterinarian

San Antonio, TX

As a Veterinarian in the State of Texas, I am in full support of HB 3442. Since the establishment of the 6th amendment to the US Constitution, people have been given the right to a fair trial which includes a notice of accusation. Why the Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners has elevated themselves above the Constitution and denied this basic right to veterinary professionals is ghastly. This certainly does not provide a sense of "innocent until proven guilty". Too much power is placed in the hands of the board members to ask or not ask the right questions to establish a solid understanding of whether a violation happened or did not happen. The person being accused should have the accusation made available to them so they can be sure their point of view is heard loud and clear.

Consideration must be given to the possibility that someone may mount a personal attack against a veterinarian and raise false claims. Without knowledge of the accusation, it leaves the veterinarian unnecessarily spinning their wheels trying to figure out how to defend themselves against something they may or may not have done. This would be the same as a police officer pulling me over, issuing a ticket, and saying nothing about what I am being accused of. Acts like this prevent the accused from not only being able to mount a defense from a wrongful accusation (maybe he pulled over the wrong car), but also prevents the driver from learning from a mistake they made to help ensure it never happens again.

We should also look at how other professional boards conduct their business. Medical, dental and legal boards all provide notice of the accusation to the accused. It is not only fair, but a basic practice in our judicial system that has been around for quite some time and should not be disregarded.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Walter Burghardt

BluePearl Specialty Hospital

San Antonio, TX

Providing the subject veterinarian with a copy of a complaint against them gives that veterinarian the ability to identify the nature of a complaint and retrieve and review the specific case records relevant to that complaint. Since there could be a substantial amount of time between the provision of services and filing of a complaint, this would allow the subject veterinarian to retrieve the correct record, understand allegations made against them, and prepare materials in support of their defense, if appropriate. In addition, this would provide better feedback to the subject veterinarian in the event that a correctable error occurred in case management. Even if an allegation is unsubstantiated, process improvements may be made by understanding the nature of a complaint.

lynsey wagner

self

league city, TX

I am a veterinarian in Texas and I support this bill. The State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners should be required to provide a copy of the complaint to the subject of the complaint.

When a complaint is filed with the Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners, throughout the entire complaints process, the board only provides the licensee with an animal name and date range of the complaint. This practice can make it difficult to initially determine which medical records to retrieve if there has been a time lapse between seeing that particular patient and the complaint of if the veterinarian has seen similar patients. Likewise, it is extremely difficult for veterinarians to defend themselves against a complaint if they have no idea what is alleged. Basic fairness dictates that a veterinarian should be able to know what is alleged by the complainant.

Even a complaint is dismissed, a licensee cannot discover what it was about, and this removes an important opportunity to learn.

When a licensee requests a copy of the complaint from the board they are told to file an open records request which is always denied. This needs to change.

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Charity Stone, DVM

Self, veterinarian

Conroe, TX

We need to be able to see the complaints issued so we can make adjustments for our future patients and and practice if deemed necessary.

Rama Santschi, DVM

Northwest Pet Hospital, Veterinarian

Georgetown, TX

Without having a copy of the complaint, it can make it difficult to initially determine which medical records to retrieve if there has been a time lapse between seeing that particular patient and the complaint of if the veterinarian has seen similar patients. Likewise, it is extremely difficult for veterinarians to defend themselves against a complaint if they have no idea what is alleged. Basic fairness dictates that a veterinarian should be able to know what is alleged by the complainant.

Even if a complaint is dismissed, a licensee cannot discover what it was about, and this removes an important opportunity to learn.

When a licensee requests a copy of the complaint from the board they are told to file an open records request which is always denied.

HB1851 provides a provision that allows the board to withhold complaints if providing a copy would jeopardize an investigation and does not change other existing provisions which protect confidentially with regard to other investigation files and records gathered by the board.

Thank you for helping make veterinarian's lives easier.

Rama Santschi, DVM

CAROL S Hillhouse, owner

Carson County Veterinary Clinic

Panhandle, TX

Thank you for this!!

David Taylor, DVM

self / veterinarian

Fort Davis, TX

To be quite frank, it is ridiculous that the subject of a complaint is not allowed to see the complaint! Would you like to be in that situation? No one would. Quite simply; this needs fixing. Way overdue.

Stephanie Boone

Texas A&M Univeristy Doctor of Veterinary Medicine Class of 2024

Bryan, TX

As a future practitioner in Texas, I am in support of more information being provided to subjects of complaints. DVMs dedicate their lives to providing the best care possible for their patients and clients, which includes continual improvement on themselves by constant learning and adapting. Efficiency and thoroughness is required for improvement, and the current process of

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complaint investigation allows for neither of these things, but squanders valuable time in pulling incorrect records and leaves the subject wondering what exactly they did or did not do that would warrant a complaint. This can be a source of psychological stress that, built up over time and combined with previous or subsequent complaints, can be damaging long-term in a profession already prone to poor mental health and high risk of suicide. The opportunity to learn from mistakes and improve absolutely must be encouraged by providing additional information to the subject and protection for both the subject of the complaint and the complainant. This process desperately needs streamlining and restructuring to allow for long-term positive results to follow negative events for the benefit of all involved.

Pamela Lee Barlow, Dr.

Self --- Veterinarian

Bowie, TX

If I am an accused, I have the Constitutional right to know my accuser and the accusations made against me. I also have the right to ask for and receive any evidence that has been gathered through discovery and the investigative process, including any exculpatory evidence. Even though this is an administrative matter instead of a court of law, my license and livelihood would be at risk, and I should therefore have the same rights and ability to defend myself. HB 3442 represents the common sense enactment and codification of what should be routine and normal practice already for any licensee accused. I ask that all vote in favor of protecting the rights of practicing Veterinarians in Texas.

Mary White, DVM

Self, Veterinarian

San Angelo, TX

To the Members of the House Committee on Agriculture and Livestock, I am in support of the bill HB 3442 proposed by Representative Anderson that would require the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners to provide a copy of the complaint to the subject of the complaint. I am a licensed veterinarian in general private practice and providing these comments from that perspective. For those licensees that do receive complaints, it is only fair that they know the exact nature of the complaint. Should a complaint be dismissed, I should still have access to the complaint. I cannot learn from any real or perceived problems regarding the care I deliver to my patients and clients if I am not aware of the complaint. Open records requests to obtain a copy of the complaint can be filed but are infrequently, if ever, accepted. Furthermore, the current process undertaken by the State Board only provides an animal name and date range. If I were to have to defend myself against a complaint, I should have access to the actual complaint so that I can fully prepare for that defense. We do need a way for complaints to be filed and for those complaints to be investigated to protect the integrity of the practice of veterinary medicine in the State of Texas, but it is not fair for someone that has a complaint filed against them to not know what the complaint is about. Thank you for your time in reading these comments. Sincerely, Dr. Mary Anne White

Kevin Walter

SELF

Cedar Park, TX

If a complaint is filed with the State Board, then the details must absolutely be shared with the Veterinarian. Not being provided this information is un-American and would be like being charged with a crime but not being told what you did wrong. I am honestly amazed this has actually been standard procedure.

Lisa Morgan, Dr

Self veterinarian

Texarkana, TX

Please allow this bill to pass. As a veterinarian, I have not had to defend my actions in front of the medical board, however due to the number of patients I treat, not having a clear understanding of the situation would make it extremely difficult to not only find

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my medical notes that pertain to the event in question but to be able to fully explain and/or defend any actions that are under question. I feel it is a basic right to know what the accused is actually being accused of in a case of any legal dispute. I, and most of my colleagues, will be watching this bill and will be following the voting on this bill closely. Thank you for your time.

Jennifer Link Wilcox

Self/ veterinarian

Frisco, TX

I am writing in support of this bill. I was personally affected by this issue during a divorce. Although this is intended to be for the clients benefit, when disclosure of information is not required the vet has no ability to know what is going on. I received a letter from the board which is extremely stressful and had no idea what the issue was about. My ex-husband filed a bogus complaint with the state board in order to harass and try to embarrass me. He sent a copy of a videotaped deposition with very personal information to the board and I had no way to see what information they had or to know when the issue would be resolved. It took months before I was officially cleared of any wrongdoing. This was handled poorly by the board as I was kept in the dark about what information they even had to support any claim of wrongdoing on my part.

Eleanor Green

TVMA

Millsap, TX

•I support this bill enthusiastically for the following reasons:

When a complaint is filed with the Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners, throughout the entire complaints process, the board only provides the licensee with an animal name and date range of the complaint.

- Licensees have also reported that this practice can make it difficult to initially determine which medical records to retrieve if there has been a time lapse between seeing that particular patient and the complaint or if the veterinarian has seen similar patients. Likewise, it is extremely difficult for veterinarians to defend themselves against a complaint if they have no idea what is alleged. Basic fairness dictates that a veterinarian should be able to know what is alleged by the complainant.
- Even a complaint is dismissed, a licensee cannot discover what it was about, and this removes an important opportunity to learn.
- When a licensee requests a copy of the complaint from the board they are told to file an open records request which is always denied.
- HB1851 provides a provision that allows the board to withhold complaints if providing a copy would jeopardize an investigation and does not change other existing provisions which protect confidentiality with regard to other investigation files and records gathered by the board

Gary Norsworthy

Alamo Feline Health Center

Hill Country Village, TX

I was recently the victim of a complaint to the State Board of Veterinary Examiners regarding alleged substandard care of a cat with lymphoma, among other issues. That was all the information that I received.

It was a complicated case that came to me as a second opinion. There were multiple issues with the care that was given before the cat came to me. Because of the very general complaint of "substandard care," I was forced to defend myself against very non-specific charges that could have been related to multiple diseases.

I spent over 10 hours reviewing the case and listing every detail that I could recall; however, it was over 6 months old so I was at a huge disadvantage in recalling the specifics of the case.

I would also add that my wife is currently disabled from a cervical subluxation related to a car wreck (that was not her fault). Four months after her cervical surgery, she had a suspected TIA that resulted in her falling in our driveway in 50 degree weather. She landed on her head causing several lacerations and a concussion. She laid there for about an hour before our grandson found

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her. When she got to the ER she was semi-conscious and her body temperature was 94 degrees. This set her back considerably as it further injured her cervical spinal cord. I tell you all of this because I now have to spend a great deal of time tending to her needs while still trying to work full-time. The above complaint came in the middle of that. I certainly did not need to spend over 10 hours addressing non-specific charges when the issue could have been addressed in 2-3 hours had I known the specific charges.

It is very unfair to veterinarians who are charged with "substandard care" without specifics. I strongly support this bill.

Douglas Bronstad, Dr.

Self - DVM

McKinney, TX

I strongly agree that the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners should provide a copy of a complaint to the subject of the complaint!

Kelley Kays, Dvm, Dr.

Self veterinarian

Winnie, TX

I think it is important that an accused person is Aware Of what they are being accused of. It is helpful for many reasons some of which include

1. Proper knowledge of the complaint
2. Defense
- 3 correct paperwork
- 4 Learning by understanding where improvements can be made

Therefore I do not want to remove the right for the accused person to be aware of the charges against them. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully yours,
Kelley Kays Dvm

Lori Teller, Dr

self/veterinarian

Bellaire, TX

When the Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners notifies a veterinarian that a complaint has been filed against them, the TBVME just provides the animal's name and a range of dates and asks the veterinarian to submit the patient's records. This can be very difficult to comply with, especially if the pet has a very common name, such as Bella or Max for a dog, or Tiger for a cat. We can see several patients with these names in a short period of time. As veterinarians, we are required to maintain client and patient confidentiality, so it does not seem appropriate that we send in the records of several different patients, hoping that one of them is the one the TBVME needs. The veterinarian should be told the name of the client and the patient and the date, in order to send the correct records. The veterinarian should also be told what the complaint is about, in order to appropriately respond. Any defendant should be allowed to know what the alleged complaint is against him or her. Even if the complaint is dismissed, the licensee is not told what the complaint was about and misses the opportunity to learn. The licensee is told to file an open records request to get a copy of the complaint. This is a waste of time and money for everyone because the requests are denied. Thank you for your consideration of HB3442, and I hope you will support its passage.

Janet Greathouse, Dr.

Self- veterinary medicine

Fort Davis, TX

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I feel that with the way the law is right now, veterinarians are denied our basic right of facing our accuser. In every other aspect of the law, the accused is told of what wrong-doing they are being accused.

In current times, we are seeing a rise of veterinarians being bullied through no fault of our own. More and more veterinarians are being targeted unfairly, anytime there is an unfavorable outcome from an animal's illness or trauma- even if the fault is not ours at all.

If people are allowed to file claims against us, we need to be able to know what the complaint is and who filed it. This is important because we need to know in order to: 1) defend ourselves and our livelihoods 2) know what to correct if we did, in fact, do something wrong.

Being a veterinarian should not mean that we lose our basic rights as an American citizen.

Please support change to this horrible law as it stands now.

Michael Pavlov, Dr.

Self

Blanco, TX

I fully support HB3442. It is only decent and fair if a complaint is filed against the veterinarian to provide a copy of the complaint to him/her. Many good reasons for that have been outlined in the bill. Providing a copy of the complaint would give the veterinarian the ability to better address it and hopefully will speed up the investigation which can drag for months or years, and even if the subject of the complaint is exonerated at the end, the whole process becomes the punishment. Thank you.

William Cortiaus, DVM

TVMA

Dallas, TX

I am voicing support for passage of this bill

Mary Egan, DVM

Self/Veterinarian

Houston, TX

Please pass this bill. It is only just and fair for a veterinarian being accused of malpractice or breach of standard of care to know who the complainant is and what the veterinarian is being accused of. A court of law makes this a requirement and the State Board should be held to the same standard.

Mark Homer, Dr.

Southeast Animal Hospital

San Antonio, TX

I concur with the afore mentioned points.

I have a few of my own.

I was notified that my board meeting was informal and that I would not need a lawyer. I hired a lawyer immediately after hearing this.

I was not told that this was the hearing that would decide to pursue my legal defense or plead guilty.

The meeting was my first introduction to Zoom.

I was unable to hear portions of the proceeding due to my lack of familiarity with this technology.

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I expected a collegial, professional fact gathering session as very little information was gathered from me. I got a lecture that was demeaning, insulting and based on a narrative presented in the initial complaint that made me look incompetent.

I defended myself as I learned the alledged facts. It was appearant that the mind of the board member, with experience as an icu hospitalist at an urban emergence practice, believed i was incompetant and her and a non professional on the board tag teamed me. My question, base on the information available to me at the time should i have known the diagnoses. It was obvious to them! Facts presented in the complaint were altered by the complainant based on the diagnosis i determined at necropy. I was unable to get a fair hearing as the participant never allowed my discovery nor defense.

I was steamrolled into accepting either another hearing in Austin with a Administrative Law Judge base on this same set of facts or pay my fine and take a continuing education classes in critical care medicine and radiology. To date i have spent as much time looking for these topics in C E catelogs online as the hours i was to take. I have no known contact with the state board to report to. I have no communication with the board. The board has twice contacted my lawyer. He has his assistant let me know that the board called.

There were several statements made at the hearing that really chapped me. "I could not possibly know the situation that my clients are in. " and " I don't know how old you are but..." unrepeatable comment" about my competency.

We all know my license number shows when i was licensed, and is a very close representation of my age. My age group generally can stop work at any time. It seems to me that this type of disrespect from within the profession is designed to make Doctors say , " It's not worth it". I've fought that urge. I saw 12019 new clients in my hospital in 2020 because clients from other practices were told to call back next week. In my hospital. If you are sick today, you are seen today. My regular clients know to make an appointment. That's an accomplishment for a one Dr. practice. I owe my success to my staff.

Christine Hinze
self veterinarian
Galveston, TX

Please support this. We should understand fully what we are defending ourselves against.

Anthony Meyer, DVM
self, veterinarian
Pasadena, TX

The copy of the complaint is very important to the subject of the complaint to realize the nature of the complaint and the medical history on file with the veterinarian that handled the case. It is difficult to respond to the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners as to the validity of the complaint if the written complaint is not known by the subject of the complaint.

Rickey Broussard
Self/DVM
Ingleside, TX

In any court, the person being accused should know what the accusation is, and to not do so is a travesty of justice. I recently had a client turn me over twice and told a friend it was to run me out to town! She did it on purpose! The worst thing about your process besides not knowing the complaints explicitly is that the person doesn't even have to show for the hearing. That is also a travesty of justice! In this instance, I spent hours, gas, money, and hotel! She stayed at home and had zero teeth in the game. There is no honor in this system, PERIOD.

William Upton, Dr
Myself as a practicing veterinarian
Houston, TX

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I strongly support this bill by Dr Anderson. The concept of being charged with a violation of the practice act but not being told what the violation is an example of government at it's worst. There is no fairness in telling a veterinarian to explain their actions when they don't even know what their violation was.

William G Upton DVM

Angela Talluto, Dr

Self - Veterinarian

League City, TX

I am support of this bill. As someone who had a board complaint, that thankfully was dismissed, I never actually saw what the complaint was for. This made it difficult to defend myself during the review process.

Kathryn Henshaw, Dr.

Self- Veterinarian

League City, TX

I believe this bill would allow veterinarians to be able to better defend themselves and their license by allowing us to have more information about a complaint.

Alice Wolf

Self - Veterinarian

Bryan, TX

When a complaint is filed with the Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners, throughout the entire complaints process, the board only provides the licensee with an animal name and date range of the complaint.

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Even a complaint is dismissed, a licensee cannot discover what it was about, and this removes an important opportunity to learn.

When a licensee requests a copy of the complaint from the board they are told to file an open records request which is always denied.

HB1851 provides a provision that allows the board to withhold complaints if providing a copy would jeopardize an investigation and does not change other existing provisions which protect confidentially with regard to other investigation files and records gathered by the board.

This bill would improve the ability of veterinarians to defend themselves in the case of a complaint to the TBVME and would preserve the confidentiality of the process.

Shawn Messonnier

self

plano, TX

I am currently facing a board complaint. They have refused to provide any information to me so I'm having to guess who might have made the complaint and what is involved. They scheduled a hearing and refused to provide any info to myself or my attorney. As such we went to court to reschedule the hearing until they provide information that would allow me to provide a

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defense. I'm still waiting on getting the actual complaints and have no idea if the board will comply with the order to provide the complaint but I cannot consent to a hearing without a proper defense.

Mallory Cade, Dr.

MALLORY A CADE

San Antonio, TX

I think it is vital to all DVMs to know if a complaint has been lodged, WHAT the complaint is, if/how it will be addressed, and when it was filed. This is a huge learning opportunity, for example, any instance where a client is upset with a case or policy I have in place, I review the policy to see if a change could be made to prevent the issue in the future. Is it something we can better communicate? Is the policy current with area standards, etc? These are ways to make sure we are always looking for the best practice and allowing this information to be passed to the veterinarian is absolutely important.

Wendi Schumacher, Veterinarian

Self

Dayton, TX

Please pass this bill. It is nearly impossible to defend against an unknown complaint. We are given no information so we do not know what to defend against. Also, we can not learn from the mistake/experience if we don't have the information to review. Even criminal proceedings and civil suits know who/what they are defending against. Why are veterinarians denied this?

Carolyn Fauber, DVM

Self, DVM

Granbury, TX

This sounds fair. If the client is making a public complaint, then it should indeed be seen by the accused. I imagine this was the original intent, because to not even know what you are defending is ludicrous.

Jeff Jones, Dr.

self

Harker Heights, TX

What would be a good and valid reason to with hold the information of the complaint from the veterinarian involved? What purpose to the good of the profession does that serve? Anyone accused of wrong doing should at the very least be made aware of what they are accused of.

William Glass, D.V.M.

Veterinarian member of TVMA and member of TVMA Bovine Committee

Gonzales, TX

As a veterinarian, if a complaint is made about me to the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners, I would appreciate the opportunity to see a copy of the complaint. It would allow me to produce the proper records and defend myself more fully. It will produce a much fairer process to allow the subject of the complaint to receive a copy of the complaint.

Brooke Knowlton, Dr.

self, DVM

Cibolo, TX

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I am in support of the board providing a copy of the complaint to the subject of the complaint. As a practitioner that has had claims filed against them, 2 of which have been dismissed and 1 still pending, it is a learning tool and better prepares me to understand the client's perspective. There's always two sides to every story and it is hard to share your side when you may not understand why someone is upset/see it from their point of view or even know what the complaint is about.

Janie Carpenter, Dr.

TVMA

Richardson, TX

If a client has the right to make a complaint, then the veterinarian has the right to read that complaint, in its entirety, in order to defend their license (and their livelihood / career) and make a reply specifically to that complaint. Otherwise, it is like being arrested and asked to defend yourself without ever knowing what the charges are. It is like giving an answer without ever knowing the question. That sounds ridiculous to me.

Victoria Galvan, Dr.

Self

Edinburg, TX

Although I have not had a complaint or case with the TBVME, I do strongly believe that should I in the future, I would want to know about the case that was filed against me, why and so that I can better improve myself as a Veterinarian and as a person. Not knowing hardly anything about a complaint or why it was filed basically does nothing to stop such event from happening in the future/or improving my medicine/my practice in the future if I know nothing about what the client believes I did wrong. We as Veterinarians should know why a case was filed against us because we are always trying to improve our practice, our craft and ourselves and not knowing why cases are filed against us does not allow us to grow or learn.

Andre Michel, DVM

chandler veterinary clinic

Tyler, TX

To Whom it May Concern,

As a practicing veterinarian I feel that it is only right and fair that a licensee is allowed access to the information regarding a complaint that has been made against them. Not only would it allow the licensee to get the records together in a timely fashion, if a complaint is dismissed it may allow the licensee to make changes to avoid a similar complaint in the future. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Derrick Nelson, DVM

Self

Azle, TX

This bill is so self-evident that it is amazing that this has not been passed before. How can anyone defend themselves if they do not know what they are charged with? Just pass it, and give us veterinarians the chance to defend themselves fairly.